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MILITARY OPERATIONS NEAR PHILADELPHIA IN
THE CAMPAIGN OF 1777-8.

DESCRIBED IN A LETTER FROM THOMAS PAINE TO DR. FRANKLIN.

FROM THE ORIGINAL IN THE POSSESSION OF THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

YORKTOWN, May 16, 1778.

DEAR SIR: Your favor of October 7th did not come to me till March. I was at camp when Captain Folger arrived with the blank packet. The private letters were, I believe, all safe. Mr. Laurens¹ forwarded yours to me, but by some accident it missed me, and was returned again to York Town, where I afterwards received it. The last winter has been rather barren of military events, but for your amusement I send you a little nistory how I have passed away part of the time.

The 11th of September last I was preparing dispatches for you when the report of cannon at Brandywine interrupted my proceedings. The event of that day you have doubtless been informed of, which, excepting the enemy keeping the ground, may be deemed a drawn battle. General Washington collected his army at Chester, and the enemy's not moving towards him next day must be attributed to the disability they sustained, and the burthen of their wounded. On the 16th of the same month, the two armies were drawn up in order of battle near the White Horse on Lancaster Road, when a most violent and incessant storm of rain prevented an action. Our army sustained a heavy loss in their ammunitiion; the cartuch-boxes, especially, as they were not of the most seasoned leather, being no proof against the almost irresistible fury of the weather, which obliged General Washington to draw his army up into the country until these injuries could be repaired, and a new supply of ammunitiion procured.² The enemy, in the

¹ Henry Laurens, of S. C., President of the Continental Congress from Nov. 1, 1777, to Dec. 10, 1778.

² See Penn. Mag. vol. i. p. 297.

mean time, kept on the west side of the Schuylkill. On Friday, the 19th, about one in the morning, the first alarm of their crossing was given, and the confusion, as you may suppose, was very great.¹ It was a beautiful, still, moonlight morning, and the streets as full of men, women, and children as on a market day. On the evening before I was fully persuaded that unless something was done the city would be lost, and under that anxiety I went to Colonel Bayard, Speaker of the House of Assembly,² and represented, as I very particularly

¹ See Morton's *Diary*, Penn. Mag. vol. i. p. 3.

² John Bayard was a native of Bohemia Manor, Cecil Co., Md., where he was b. August 11, 1738. At the breaking out of the Revolution he was a citizen of Philadelphia, and took an active part in the questions of the day, in favor of the Colonies. He was a member of the Provincial Congress held in July, 1774, the calling of which compelled the Assembly to appoint delegates to the general Congress; and was one of the sixty citizens chosen on the 12th of November, to see to the fulfilment, on the part of Philadelphia, of the Articles of Association entered into by that body. In January, 1775, Mr. Bayard was a member of the Convention of the Province, "the ostensible object of which was the encouragement of domestic industry, while it really was meant to exercise a supervision of the conduct of the Assembly;" the same year he was chosen Major of the 2d Battalion of City Militia. In 1776, the mercantile firm with which he was connected, Hodge & Bayard, was engaged in furnishing Congress with arms, and Mr. Bayard was appointed by the Committee of Safety, with others, to superintend the erection of powder mills. In June, Mr. Bayard attended, as a member, the meeting of the "Committee of Conference," held in Carpenter's Hall to decide upon the manner in which a convention should be called to alter the Constitution of the Province; it was this body that announced its "willingness to concur in a vote of the Congress," declaring the independence of the Colonies. On the 11th of September, 1776, Mr. Bayard was appointed one of the Council of Safety by the Constitutional Convention, to which position he was reappointed by the Assembly the following year (Oct. 25, 1777). On the 21st of October, 1776, Mr. Bayard presided at a public meeting in the State House yard, at which the merits of the new State Constitution were debated, and on the 28th of the month following, he took his seat as a member of the Assembly, in the first session of that body held under the new instrument. In the winter of 1776-7, as Colonel of the 2d Battalion of Penna. Militia, he took part in the Jersey campaign, and was present at the battle of Trenton. On the 13th of Dec. 1776, Mr. Bayard wrote to the Council of Safety from the camp at Bristol: "We are greatly distressed to find no more of the militia of our State joining General Washington at this time; for God's Sake

knew it, the situation we were in, and the probability of saving the city if proper efforts were made for that purpose. I reasoned that General Washington was about thirty miles up the Schuylkill, with an army properly collected waiting for ammunition, beside which a reinforcement of fifteen hundred men were marching from the North River to join him, and if only an appearance of defence be made in the city by throwing up works at the heads of the streets, it will make the enemy very suspicious how they throw themselves between the city and General Washington, and between two rivers, which must have been the case. For notwithstanding the knowledge military gentlemen are supposed to have, I observe they move exceedingly cautious on new ground, and are exceedingly suspicious of villages and towns, and more perplexed at seemingly little things which they cannot clearly understand than at great ones which they are fully acquainted with, and I

what shall we do; is the cause deserted by our State, and shall a few Brave men offer their Lives as a Sacrifice against treble their number without assistance? For my own part, I came cheerfully out, not doubting we should be Joined by a number sufficient to drive our Enemy back with Shame, Despair and Loss I am far from thinking our cause desperate. If our people would but turn out If I thought I could be of any service I would leave my Battalion and come down for a little while; for God's sake exert yourselves." On the 13th day of March he was appointed a member of the State Board of War. In Dec. 1777, with James Young, he visited Washington's camp, to report on the condition of the Pennsylvania troops, and their letters to President Wharton give a distressing account of the army previous to the occupation of Valley Forge. On the 6th of Nov. 1778, Mr. Bayard was chosen Speaker of the Assembly; in 1780, he was made one of the auctioneers of Philadelphia, and the same year was on a committee to visit the several counties, and report the causes of the falling off of the revenues of the State. From the 12th of Oct. 1781, until the same day the following year he was a member of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, and on the 11th of Nov. 1785, was chosen one of the delegates to the Continental Congress. In 1778, Mr. Bayard removed to Brunswick, N. J., where he filled in turn the positions of Mayor of the city, and Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. A pupil of the celebrated Gilbert Tennent, and a friend of Whitfield, Mr. Bayard was throughout his life a man guided by strong religious convictions. At the time of his death, he was a Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church at New Brunswick. He died Jan. 7, 1807, aged 68 years.

think it very probable that General Howe would have mistaken our necessity for a deep-laid scheme, and not ventured himself in the middle of it.

But admitting that he had, he must either have brought his whole army down, or a part of it. If the whole, Gen. Washington would have followed him perhaps the same day, in two or three days at most, and our assistance in the city would have been material. If only a part of it, we should have been a match for them, and Gen. Washington superior to those who remained above. The chief thing was whether the citizens would turn out to defend the city. My proposal to Cols. Bayard and Bradford¹ was to call them together the next morning, make them fully acquainted with the situation, and the means and prospects of preserving themselves, and that the city had better voluntarily assess itself 50,000 for its defence, than suffer an enemy to come into it. Cols. Bayard and Bradford were of my opinion, and as Gen. Mifflin was then in town, I next went to him, acquainted him with our design, and mentioned likewise that if two or three thousand men could be mustered up, whether we might depend on him to command them, for without some one to lead nothing could be done. He declined that part, not being then very well, but promised what assistance he could. A few hours

¹ Col. William Bradford, grandson of William Bradford who introduced the art of Printing in the Middle Colonies. It is impossible in the limits of a foot-note to do justice to the valuable and disinterested services he rendered his State. Born in N. Y. in 1719, he removed to Philadelphia when young, and was at one time a partner of his Uncle Andrew. In 1742, he published the first number of the *Pennsylvania Journal*, and in 1757 the *American Magazine*, a monthly periodical, which continued for 12 numbers and supplement. In 1754, in addition to the business of a printer, he opened the London Coffee House, and in 1762 a marine-insurance office. He was active in military affairs during the old French war, and opposed with great spirit the Stamp Act. During the Revolution he held the commission of Maj. and Col. in the militia, and was in the battles of Trenton and Princeton, in the latter of which he was wounded. As Chairman of the State Navy Board, he was present at the defence of Fort Mifflin. The close of the war found him "with shattered health, and ruined fortune." Franklin said of him, "his writing was spirited, his press correct, and his sword active." He died in Philadelphia, Sept. 25, 1791.

after this, the alarm happened. I went directly to Gen. Mifflin, but he had set off, and nothing was done. I cannot help being of opinion that the city might have been saved, but perhaps it is better otherwise. I stayed in the city till Sunday, having sent my chest and everything belonging to the Foreign Committee¹ to Trenton in a shallop. The enemy did not cross the river till the Wednesday following.

Hearing on the Sunday² that General Washington had moved to Sweed's Ford, I set off for that place, but learning on the road that it was a mistake, and that he was six or seven miles above that place, I crossed over to Southfield, and next morning to Trenton, to see after my chest. On the Wednesday morning I intended returning to Philadelphia, but was informed at Bristol of the enemy crossing the Schuylkill.³ At this place I met Col. Kirkbride, of Pennsbury Manor, who invited me home with him. On Friday, the 26th, a party of about 1500 men took possession of the city, and the same day an account arrived that Colonel Brown had taken 300 of the enemy at the old French lines at Ticonderoga, and destroyed all their water craft, being about 200 boats of different kinds.

On the 26th of September,⁴ I set off for camp without well knowing where to find it. Every day occasioned some movement. I kept pretty high up the country, and being unwilling to ask questions, not knowing what company I might be in, I was all that day before I fell in with it. The army had moved about three miles lower down that morning. The next day they made a movement about the same distance to the twenty-first mile-stone on the Skippack Road, Head-Quar-

¹ Paine was at that time Secretary of the Committee named.

² The 21st of September.

³ Howe crossed the Schuylkill on the night of the 22d, and morning of the 23d.

⁴ Sparks gives no letters of Washington written between the 24th and 29th, on which last date Head-Quarters were at Pennypacker's Mills. Parson Muhlenberg, who lived in the vicinity, recorded in his journal on the 26th: "The American army came to-day from New Hanover, six miles towards Providence, and then marched sideways across to the Skippack Road."

ters at John Wince's.¹ On the 3d of October, in the morning, they began to fortify the camp as a deception, and about nine at night marched for Germantown. The number of Continental troops was between 8000 and 9000, besides militia, the rest remaining as guards for the security of the camp. Gen. Green, whose quarters I was at, desired me to remain there till morning. I set off for Germantown about five next morning. The skirmishing with the pickets began soon after. I met no person for several miles riding, which I concluded to be a good sign. After this I met a man on horseback, who told me he was going to hasten on to supply the ammunition, that the enemy were broken and retreating fast, which was true. I saw several country people with arms in their hands running cross a field towards Germantown, within about five or six miles of which I met several of the wounded in wagons, horseback, and on foot. I passed Gen. Nash on a litter made of poles, but did not know him. I felt unwilling to ask questions, lest the information should not be agreeable, and kept on.

About two miles after I passed a promiscuous crowd of wounded and otherwise, who were halted at a house. Col. Biddle, D. Q. M. G.,² was among them, who called after me that if I went further on that road I would be taken, for the firing which I heard a head was the enemy's. I never could, and cannot now, learn, and I believe no man can inform truly

¹ Scull's map shows that J. Wentz lived on the Skipack Road below the creek of that name. See, also, map in Penna. Mag. vol. i. p. 375.

² Col. Clement Biddle, b. Philadelphia, May 10, 1740. Although his parents were members of the Society of Friends, in 1764 he formed a military corps to protect the friendly Indians, who had sought refuge in Philadelphia, from the fury of the Paxton boys. In 1765, he was one of the signers of the Non-Importation resolutions, occasioned by the passage of the Stamp Act. As Col. of a regiment, and Deputy Quartermaster-General, he took an active part in the military operations around Philadelphia. He was Quartermaster-General of Pennsylvania in the expedition under Washington to suppress the Whiskey Insurrection. His relations with Washington were of an intimate character, and their correspondence continued until the General's decease. He died in Philadelphia, July 14th, 1814.—*Simpson's Lives of Eminent Philadelphians.*

the cause of that day's miscarriage. The retreat was as extraordinary. Nobody hurried themselves. Every one marched his own pace. The enemy kept a civil distance behind, sending every now and then a shot after us, and receiving the same from us. That part of the army which I was with collected and formed on the hill on the side of the road near White Marsh Church. The enemy came within three-fourths of a mile and halted. The orders on retreat were to assemble that night on the back of Perkioming Creek, about seven miles above camp, which had orders to move. The army had marched the preceding night fourteen miles, and having full twenty to march back were exceedingly fatigued. They appeared to me to be only sensible of a disappointment, not a defeat; and to be more displeased at their retreating from Germantown, than anxious to get to their rendezvous.

I was so lucky that night to get to a little house about four miles west of Perkioming, toward which place in the morning I heard a considerable firing, which distressed me exceedingly, knowing that our army was much harassed and not collected. However, I soon relieved myself by going to see. They were discharging their pieces, which, though necessary, prevented several parties from joining till next day. I breakfasted next morning at Gen. Washington's quarters, who was at the same loss, with every other, to account for the accidents of the day. I remember his expressing his surprise that at the time he supposed everything secure, and was about giving orders for the army to proceed down to Philadelphia, that he saw most unexpectedly a part (I think) of the artillery hastily retreating. This partial retreat was I believe misunderstood, and soon followed by others. The fog was frequently very thick, the troops young, and unused to breaking and rallying, and our men rendered suspicious to each other, many of them being in red. A new army, once disordered, is difficult to manage, and the attempt dangerous. To this may be added a prudence in not putting matters to too hazardous a trial. The first time men must be taught regular fighting by practice and by degrees, and though the expedition failed, it had this good effect that they seemed to feel themselves more important

after, than before, as it was the first general attack they had ever made.

I have not related the affair at Mr. Chew's house, in Germantown, as I was not there, but have seen it since. It certainly afforded the enemy time to rally, yet the matter was difficult. To have passed on and left five hundred men in the rear, might, by a change of circumstances, been ruinous; to attack them was a loss of time, as the house is a strong stone building, proof against any twelve-pounder. General Washington sent a flag, thinking it would procure the surrender, and expedite his march to Philadelphia. It was refused, and circumstances changed almost directly after. I stayed in camp two days after the Germantown action, and lest my ill impressions should get among the garrison at Mud Island and Red Bank, and the vessels and galleys stationed there, I crossed over to the Jerseys at Trenton, and went down to those places. I laid the first night on board of the *Champion* Continental galley, who was stationed off the mouth of the Schuylkill. The enemy threw up a two-gun battery on the point of the river's mouth, opposite the Pest House. The next morning was a thick fog, and as it cleared away and we became visible to each other, they opened on the galley, who returned the fire. The Commodore made a signal to bring the galley under the Jersey shore, as she was not a match for the battery, nor the battery a sufficient object for the galley. One shot went through the fore-sail, that was all.

At noon I went with Col. Green,¹ who commanded at Red Bank, over to Fort Mifflin (Mud Island). The enemy opened that day two gun batteries and a mortar battery on the fort.²

¹ Col. Christopher Greene, of R. I., b. 1734. He bravely defended Fort Mercer, at Red Bank, against the attack made by Count Donop on the 21st of Oct. when that officer was killed. He was with Arnold on his march through the wilderness, and was taken prisoner at the attack on Quebeck. On the 13th of May, 1781, his quarters on the Croton River were surprised by a party of refugees, and he was slain.—*Rogers*.

² Oct. 9th. A heavy cannonade last night and this morning. The British are about to open batteries to bombard the Fort at Mud Island.—*Morton's Diary*.

They threw about thirty shells into it that afternoon, without doing any damage. The ground being damp and spongy, not above five or six burst, and not a man was killed or wounded. I came away in the evening, and laid on board the galley, and the next day came to Col. Kirkbride's, staid a few days, and came again to camp. An expedition was on foot the evening I got there, in which I went as aid-de-camp to General Green, having a volunteer commission for that purpose. The occasion was a party of the enemy about 1500, who lay over the Schuylkill at Grey's Ferry. General McDougal with his division was sent to attack them, and Generals Sullivan and Green with their divisions were to favor the enterprise by a feint on the city down the Germantown road. We set off about nine at night, and halted at daybreak between Germantown and the city, the advance party at Three Mile Run. As I knew the ground, I went with two light horse to discover the enemy's picket, but the dress of the light horse being white made them, I thought, too visible, as it was the twilight, on which I left them with my horse, and went on foot till I distinctly saw the picket at Dickerson's Place,¹ which is the nearest I have been to Philadelphia since September, except once at Cooper's Ferry as I went to the forts. General Sullivan was at Dr. Redman's house, and McDougal beginning the attack was to be the signal for moving down to the city. But the enemy either on the approach of McDougal, or on information of it, called in their party, and the expedition was frustrated.

A cannonade, by far the most furious I ever heard, began down the river soon after daylight,² the first gun of which was supposed to be the signal; but I was soon undeceived, there being no small arms. After waiting two hours beyond the time, we marched back. The cannon was then less frequent, but on the road between Germantown and White-marsh we were stunned with a report as loud as a peal from a hundred cannon at once, and turning round I saw a thick

¹ Near Fair Hill, on the Germantown Road below the Rising Sun, although occupied by Dickinson, it belonged to the Norris estate. See map, Penna. Mag. vol. i. p. 375.

² On the morning of the 23d.

smoke rising like a pillar and spreading from the top like a tree. This was the blowing up of the *Augusta*. I did not hear the explosion of the *Merlin*. After this I returned to Colonel Kirkbride's, where I stayed about a fortnight, and set off again for camp. The day after I got there, Generals Green, Wayne, and Cadwallader, with a party of light horse, were ordered on a reconnoitring party towards the fort. We were out four days and nights without meeting with anything material. An East Indiaman, whom the enemy had cut down so as to draw but little water, came up without guns, while we were on foot on Carpenter's Island, joining to Province Island. Her guns were brought up in the evening in a flat. She got in the rear of the fort, where few or no guns could bear upon her, and the next morning played on it incessantly. The night following the fort was evacuated; the obstruction the enemy met with from those forts, and the *chevaux-de-frise* was extraordinary, and had it not been that the western channel, deepened by the current, being somewhat obstructed by the *chevaux-de-frise* in the main river, which enabled them to bring up the light Indiaman's battery, it is a doubt whether they would have succeeded at last. By that assistance they reduced the fort, and got sufficient command of the river to move some of the late sunken *chevaux-de-frise*. Soon after the fort on Red Bank, which had bravely repulsed the enemy a little time before, was evacuated, the galleys ordered up to Bristol, and the captains of such other armed vessels as thought they could not pass on the eastward side of Windmill Island, very precipitately set them on fire.¹ As I judged from this event that the enemy would winter in Philadelphia, I began to think of preparing for Yorktown, which, however, I was willing to delay, hoping that the ice would afford opportunity for new manœuvres; but the season passed very balmly away.

I stayed at Col. Kirkbride's² until the latter end of Jan.

¹ Commodore Hazelwood in his letter to President Wharton states that the vessels were burned by direction of a Council of Continental and State officers. See Penna. Archives, vol. vi. p. 49.

² A biographical sketch of Col. Joseph Kirkbride will be found in the interesting series entitled "*Bordentown and its Environs*," by E. M. Wood-

Commodore Hazelwood, who commanded the remains of the fleet at Trenton, acquainted me with a scheme of his for burning the enemy's shipping, which was, by sending a charged boat across the river, from Cooper's Ferry, by means of a rocket fixed in its stem. Considering the width of the river,

ward, now being printed in the Bordentown Register, and from it we gather the following: Col. Kirkbride was born on the 13th of 6th month, 1731, at "Bellevue," Penn's Manor, Bucks Co., Pa. His grandfather, Joseph Kirkbride, settled in Penna. as early as 1681. The father of Col. Kirkbride was Joseph Kirkbride 2d, who m. Sarah Fletcher, of Abington, in 1724. The parents and ancestors of Col. Kirkbride had all been members of the Society of Friends, but the excitement of the Revolution soon carried him beyond the pales of that sect. Early in the war he was appointed Lieutenant of Bucks County, and was engaged in collecting recruits, arms, and other supplies for the army. He was subsequently made Col. of the Militia. In July, 1776, he was a delegate from Bucks Co. to the Constitutional Convention, of which Franklin was President, and was elected a member of the Assembly the following fall. On the 14th of Feb. 1778, he wrote to President Wharton: "I propose (if possible) to keep up a competent number of Horse, as the General finds them very useful I have agreed to raise a small party of Foot Volunteers to Check the Influence of the Torys below Bristol, and in the neighborhood near Neshaming, which will be some small security to the people in that quarter." The next day he wrote: "I am doing everything in my power to spirit up a small party to keep down the Torys until we can get some better defence." In May, 1778, the British made an expedition out of Philadelphia, and, among other damage committed, burned the residence of Col. Kirkbride, who thus speaks of the event in a letter to President Wharton: "The enemy have lately Burnt two Valuable Dwelling Houses, with all my out Houses of Every kind and sort, a great deal of Furniture Utensils, Corn, Hay, &c., and Intirely Disloging my Family, is the only apoligy I can offer your Excellency for my impunctiality. Notwithstanding, I can say with sincerity, I had rather lose ten such Estates than to be suspected to be unfriendly to my country." While in public life, Col. Kirkbride formed an acquaintance with Thomas Paine, which continued many years. In 1802, after Paine had rendered himself obnoxious to many of his former friends in America by the publication of the "Age of Reason," he called on Col. Kirkbride, then residing in Bordentown, who, remembering the eminent service Paine had rendered the country, extended to him a kindly greeting, although he could not approve of the views expressed in his work. Upon Mr. Paine's departure, he drove him in his carriage to Trenton, and was subjected to some extent to the indignities heaped upon him by the mob. Col. Kirkbride died at Bordentown on the 26th of Oct. 1803, aged 72 years.

the tide, and the variety of accidents that might change its destination, I thought the project trifling and insufficient, and proposed to him, if he would get a boat properly charged, and take a bateau in tow, sufficient to bring three or four persons off, that I would make one with him, and two other persons who might be relied on, to go down on that business. One of the company, Captain Blewer, of Philadelphia, seconded the proposal; but the Commodore, and, what I was surprised at, Colonel Bradford, declined it.

The burning of part of the Delaware fleet, the precipitate retreat of the rest, the little service rendered by them, and the great expense they were at, make the only material blot in the proceedings of the last campaign. I felt a strong anxiety for them to recover their credit, which, among others, was one motive for my proposal. After this I came to camp, and from thence to Yorktown, and published the Crisis, No. 5, to General Howe. I have begun No. 6, which I intend to address to Lord North. I was not at camp when Gen. Howe marched out on the 4th of December, towards Whitemarsh. It was a most contemptible affair. The threatening and seeming fury he set out with, and the haste and terror the army retreated with, made it laughable. I have seen several persons from Philadelphia, who assure me that their coming back was a mere uproar, and plainly indicated their apprehension of pursuit.

General Howe, in his letter to L. G. Germin, dated Dec. 13, represented General Washington's camp as a strongly-fortified place. There was not, sir, a work thrown up in it till General Howe marched out, and then only here and there a breastwork. It was a temporary station; beside which our men began to think works in the field of but little use.

General Washington keeps his station at Valley Forge. I was there when the army first began to build huts. They appeared to me like a family of beavers, every one busy; some carrying logs, others mud, and the rest plastering them together. The whole was raised in a few days, and it is a curious collection of buildings, in the true rustic order.

As to politics, I think we are safely landed; the apprehen-

sion which Britain must be under from her neighbors, must effectually prevent her sending reinforcements, could she procure them; she dare not, I think, in the present situation of affairs, trust her troops so far from home. No commissioners are yet arrived. I think fighting nearly over, for Britain mad, wicked, and foolish, has done her utmost. The only part for her now to act is frugality, and the only way to get out of debt is to lessen her Government expenses.

Two millions a year is a sufficient allowance, and as much as she ought to expend, exclusive of the interest of her debt. The affairs of England are approaching ruin or redemption, if the latter she may bless the resistance of America.

For my own part, I thought it very hard to have the country set on fire about my ears almost the moment I got into it; and among other pleasures, I feel in having uniformly done my duty. I feel that, if not having discredited your friendship and patronage, I live in hopes of seeing and advising with you respecting the history of the American Revolution, as soon as a turn of affairs make it safe for me to take a passage to Europe.¹

Please accept my thanks for the pamphlets which Mr. Temple Franklin informed me he has sent. They are not yet come to hand. Mr. and Mrs. Bache are at Manheim, near Lancaster, or I heard that they were a few days ago. I laid two nights at Mr. Duffel's in the winter. Miss Nancy Clifton was there, who said the enemy had destroyed or sold a great quantity of your furniture. Mr. Duffel has since been taken by them, and carried into the city, but is now in his own house.²

¹ Paine here alludes to a *History of the Revolution*, which he had in contemplation. In the correspondence of Henry Laurens (N. Y. 1861), a letter of Paine's will be found on the subject, in which he writes: "My design, if I understand it, is to comprise it in three quarto volumes, and to publish one each year from the time of beginning, and to make an abridgment afterwards in an easy, agreeable language for a school-book. All the histories of ancient wars, that are used for this purpose, promote no moral reflection, but, like the Beggar's Opera, render the villain pleasing in the hero."

² Edward Duffield, of Benfield, is no doubt here alluded to. He was a friend of Franklin, who appointed him one of the executors of his will. In the winter of 1777-78, a party of British lighthorse took him and several of

I just now hear they have burnt Colonel Kirkbride's, Mr. Burden's, and some other houses at Bordentown. Governor Johnson (House of Commons) has written to Mr. Robert Morris, informing him of commissioners coming from England. The letter is printed in the newspapers without signature, and is dated February 5, by which you will know it.

Please, sir, to accept this, rough and incorrect as it is, as I have no time to copy it fairly, which was my design when I began it; besides which, paper is most exceedingly scarce.

I am, dear sir, your obliged and affectionate

humble servant,

THOMAS PAINE.

The Hon. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, France.

NOTES ON THE STAMP ACT IN NEW YORK AND VIRGINIA.

CONTRIBUTED BY CHAS. R. HILDEBURN.

The manner in which the Stamp Act was resisted in the Northern Colonies has been told in detail by Mr. Brancroft. A still more elaborate account of the failure to enforce the Act in New York has been recently printed in the Magazine of American History, by Mr. John Austin Stevens, Librarian of the New York Historical Society. But little, however, has been published in regard to the action of the people of Virginia, and the account quoted from the Pennsylvania Journal is, therefore, comparatively new. The letters given are selected from the Swift papers in the writer's possession, and furnish additional light on the subject.

THE COLLECTOR AND COMPTROLLER OF THE CUSTOM AT NEW YORK
TO THE SURVEYOR-GENERAL OF THE CUSTOMS.

NEW YORK, October 28, 1765.

SIR:—

The first Day of November being near at hand, when the Stamp Act is to take place, and as there is a Great Uproar in Town, and Threatening Papers having been put up at all our

his neighbors prisoners; they were taken into Philadelphia, and confined in the Walnut Street Prison.—*Neill Memorial*, Phila. 1875. See also Penna. Mag. vol. ii. p. 62.